



# Tower Habitats Newsflash

*Latest news on nature conservation and wildlife in Tower Hamlets*

November 2018

**London in Bloom Biodiversity Award** – Tower Hamlets won the Biodiversity Award in this year's London in Bloom Awards. This discretionary award is presented for all-round excellence in biodiversity conservation across a borough's parks and open spaces. Other London in Bloom successes this year were an overall Gold Award in the City category, along with Gold Awards for Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park in the Large Conservation site and Large Cemetery Categories, for Victoria Park in the Large Park and Heritage Park & Garden Categories, and for Providence Row in the Our Community and It's Your Neighbourhood awards. Trinity Square Gardens won Silver Gilt in Heritage Park and Small Park categories. [See the full London in Bloom 2018 results.](#)

**Five new orchards** – the Council planted four new orchards in parks during the autumn. Two of these, funded by a Community Tree Planting Grant from the Mayor of London, are in the Ecology Park in Mile End Park. The other two were funded by Section 106 money from the redevelopment of the Ocean Estate. One of these is also in Mile End Park, a linear orchard along the edge of the park beside Copperfield Road. The other is in White Horse Road Park. Tower Hamlets Homes planted a fifth orchard outside Brodick House. In total, over 70 fruit trees have been planted, including apples, cherries, plums and pears. [Read more about the new orchards.](#)

**Bladderwort in Victoria Park** – local botanist John Swindells found Bladderwort growing in profusion in Victoria Park's East Lake. This is the first ever record in Tower Hamlets or inner London. Bladderwort is one of just a handful of carnivorous plants native to Britain, trapping aquatic invertebrates in tiny bladders on its leaves. [Read more about this exciting discovery.](#)

**Greening Arnold Circus** – the Friends of Arnold Circus have planted nectar-rich shrubs and perennials and installed bird and bat boxes, thanks to a Tower Habitats biodiversity grant from the Tower Hill Trust. [Read all about the project, with lots of pictures.](#)

**Two new beetles in Cemetery Park** – as part of his regular monitoring, Edward Milner has found two beetles new to Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park. These are the Clover Seed Weevil (*Protapion apricans*) and the rove beetle *Othius subuliformis*, and they bring the list of beetles recorded there to an astonishing 431 species. [Find out more about these beetles.](#)

**Be calm in Bethnal Green Nature Reserve** – the Phytology medicinal garden in Bethnal Green Nature Reserve came third in a list of the best places to feel calm in London in *Time Out* magazine. [Read the \*Time Out\* article.](#)

**More canal habitat enhancements** – in September, Thames21 installed a total of 280 metres of floating ecosystems at several places along the Limehouse Cut. Half of these were planted with reeds, and half with mixed native wetland plants. Then in October the Lower Regents Coalition, with support from the Environment Agency and Thames21, installed 40 metres of rafts with mixed native wetland plants beside Old Ford Lock in the Regent's Canal. [Read more about the Old Ford Lock project and see photos.](#)

**New book about Poplar's trees and wildlife** – Bob Gilbert, a local naturalist, environmental education specialist, former stand-up comic and husband of the Rector of All Saints Church, has written a fascinating book about the trees and other wildlife of Poplar parish, and their links to the area's history, development and communities. [Ghost Trees – Nature and People in a London Parish](#) is published by Saraband. [Read a Guardian review of the book.](#)

For more information on these and other stories, see [www.towerhabitats.org](http://www.towerhabitats.org)

If you have news on wildlife or biodiversity conservation in Tower Hamlets, please e-mail the Biodiversity Officer [john.archer@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:john.archer@towerhamlets.gov.uk) or phone 020 7364 7478